



Security Council

Sixty-first year

Provisional

5519th meeting

 Thursday, 31 August 2006, 10 a.m.
 New York

<i>President:</i>	Nana Effah-Apenteng	(Ghana)
<i>Members:</i>	Argentina	Mr. Mayoral
	China	Mr. Wang Guangya
	Congo	Mr. Ikouebe
	Denmark	Mr. Faaborg-Andersen
	France	Mr. Lacroix
	Greece	Mr. Vassilakis
	Japan	Mr. Oshima
	Peru	Mr. Gallardo
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Bader
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Slovakia	Mr. Burian
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Ms. Pierce
	United Republic of Tanzania	Mr. Mahiga
	United States of America	Mr. Bolton

Agenda

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General on Darfur (S/2006/591)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General on Darfur (S/2006/591)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of the Sudan in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Manis (Sudan) took a seat at the Council table.

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2006/591 and addendum 1, containing the report of the Secretary-General on Darfur.

Members of the Council also have before them document S/2006/699, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Argentina, Denmark, France, Ghana, Greece, Slovakia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United Republic of Tanzania and the United States of America.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Argentina, Congo, Denmark, France, Ghana, Greece, Japan, Peru, Slovakia, United Kingdom

of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America

Against:

None

Abstaining:

China, Qatar, Russian Federation

The President: The result of the voting is as follows: 12 in favour, none against and 3 abstentions. The draft resolution has been adopted as resolution 1706 (2006).

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council wishing to make statements following the voting.

Mr. Bolton (United States of America): We are pleased that the Security Council has taken this important step in adopting resolution 1706 (2006). It is imperative that we move immediately to implement it fully to stop the tragic events unfolding in Darfur. Every day we delay only adds to the suffering of the Sudanese people and extends the genocide.

The United States calls on the Government of the Sudan to comply with the terms of resolution 1706 (2006). We expect its full and unconditional cooperation and support for the new United Nations peacekeeping force. Failure on the part of the Government of the Sudan to do so will significantly undermine the Darfur Peace Agreement and prolong the humanitarian crisis in Darfur.

Resolution 1706 (2006) sets the foundation for an effective multidimensional international force. With the expansion of the force up to 17,000 military personnel and more than 3,000 civilian police, we can now expect that the AMIS re-hatting will take place rapidly and smoothly and that the follow-on United Nations force will be fully operational, with a substantial African element at its core.

Significant planning and logistical work has already taken place. Now, with the adoption of this resolution, we can begin finalizing those details as we prepare to deploy the force. The United States is ready to assist immediately in that regard. We cannot afford to delay.

The Security Council upheld its responsibility and adopted a strong resolution which offers the best hope to bolster the Darfur Peace Agreement and end the tragedy we are witnessing in Darfur. We must now

devote all of our energies to securing its immediate and full implementation.

Ms. Pierce (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom greatly welcomes the adoption of resolution 1706 (2006) by the Council today. The United Kingdom had the honour to introduce the draft resolution to the Council as one of the co-sponsors.

The crisis in Darfur, which should never have started, has gone on far too long. Over the past three years, 2 million people have been displaced and 200,000 have been killed. After months of negotiations, a peace deal — the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) — was finally signed in April this year. Three months ago, the Council met at the foreign-minister level to welcome this and to look ahead to a brighter future for the people of Darfur.

It is a great tragedy that that brighter future is not materializing and that things, rather, have got worse, not better. Violence against civilians and humanitarian workers has increased. July was the worst month for attacks on humanitarian workers, with nine deaths. To date, humanitarian organizations have had to cut back their activities, with many considering pulling out of Darfur altogether. Much of the population is without basic food and health services. There are more gender-based acts of violence and robberies, and 50,000 new internally displaced persons have been created in the last few weeks alone. As a result, the DPA is under increasing strain and in real danger of collapsing. As the United States Permanent Representative said, we cannot afford to delay any longer. Already today there are more reports of the build-up of the Sudanese military in Darfur.

Against this backdrop, the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS), which stepped in to Darfur when the United Nations asked it to, and which has done an extremely good job in exceptionally difficult circumstances, is now struggling to cope — so much so that the African Union has called for transition to a United Nations operation. This resolution responds to that call.

The test before the Council today was whether it was prepared to act to mandate that United Nations mission and assume its responsibilities towards the people of Darfur. The adoption of the resolution shows that it is. The resolution gives the United Nations force in Darfur a clear Chapter VII mandate to use all necessary means to protect civilians. We are heartened

that, as shown by the vote today, there is broad consensus among Council members that transition to a United Nations operation is the only viable solution to Darfur's problems. And if I may speak on behalf of others for a moment, I would like to say confidently, based on our conversations, that those countries that abstained did not, I believe, have a fundamental disagreement with the principle that United Nations should take over; the issue was more one of timing.

The resolution adopted today does three clear things. First, it authorizes much-needed United Nations support for AMIS, which it makes clear must begin to be deployed within the next 30 days. Secondly, it mandates the United Nations to deploy additional resources, as soon as possible thereafter, in preparation for the third element: transition to a full United Nations operation no later than 31 December.

A United Nations force operating in support of the Darfur Peace Agreement remains the best vehicle for the people of Darfur. The DPA is not perfect; no one would claim that it is. But is the best — indeed, it is the only — vehicle that we have to bring peace and stability to Darfur. The plan that the Government of the Sudan sent to the Security Council (see S/2006/665, annex) seeks to provide the military solution that Kofi Annan warned against in his report to the Council. A number of commentators have made the suggestion that we should wait to see if the Sudanese plan can be implemented and can provide a solution. We believe very firmly that it cannot. It would be a military solution imposed by one of the parties to the conflict, and one that violated resolutions 1590 (2005) and 1591 (2005), as well as the Darfur Peace Agreement itself.

The adoption of resolution 1706 (2006) today sends a clear message from the Council about the need for an unbiased, well-equipped third party to implement the DPA and ensure the protection of Darfur's civilians.

That does not mean that we do not attach importance to the consent and agreement of the Government of the Sudan. It remains the case that the United Nations cannot deploy in Darfur until we have that agreement; that is not in dispute. We look forward hopefully to the Government of the Sudan's giving its acceptance soon. But in the vote today, the Council has sent a crystal clear message that it wants that agreement to be forthcoming quickly. Indeed, in the

text of its resolution, it explicitly invites the Sudan to provide this.

We believe that if the Government of the Sudan is genuinely concerned about the welfare and protection of its citizens, there is no reason for it not to give its consent. A United Nations force will act in support of the Government of the Sudan by assisting it in implementing the DPA, which the Government of the Sudan signed and which it supports. I would like to underscore that point once more: the United Nations force is there to act in support of the Government of the Sudan; we want to work cooperatively with it. This is a United Nations force that will have a strong African participation and character. It will no more infringe on the Sudan's sovereignty than has the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS) in southern Sudan — and UNMIS is a force that the Government of the Sudan has welcomed and has accepted.

We attach great importance to the continuation of dialogue with the Sudan. The adoption of Security Council resolution 1706 (2006) does not change this. We want to do all we can to bring the Government in Khartoum on board. The United Kingdom led a Council mission to the Sudan in June for exactly that purpose. The Council sought to consult again with the Government before adopting today's resolution. Unfortunately, it chose not to accept our invitation to meet with us last Monday. We thank you, Mr. President, for your efforts to bring that meeting about. We very much regret the fact that the Government of the Sudan chose not to attend.

The United Kingdom drafted the resolution in such a way as to make it as acceptable as possible to the Sudan. We listened to the concerns that President Bashir expressed to the Council in Khartoum, and we sought to respond to them accordingly. There is, for example, no reference — although we would have liked one — to the International Criminal Court in the text. And while the resolution contains Chapter VII elements on the protection of civilians and on the United Nations force itself, it is not under Chapter VII in its entirety. The text also states clearly and categorically that the Council remains committed to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Sudan, which will be unaffected by transition to a United Nations operation.

In doing this, we believe that we have sought to meet the Sudanese Government's concerns to the

extent that we can reasonably do so. The United Kingdom will play its part in seeking to secure the Sudan's consent from now on. We sent a special envoy last week, and I know that others did the same. A British minister was standing by, ready to see President Bashir today to discuss the resolution, but unfortunately had to turn back after Bashir refused to meet with him.

Almost one year ago, the heads of State of the countries members of the Council signed the World Summit Outcome document, noting the responsibility of each United Nations Member State to protect its citizens and the international community's responsibility to assist in this if the State could not provide for such protection alone. The United Kingdom was at the forefront of efforts to secure this. We are very pleased that this is the first Security Council resolution mandating a United Nations peacekeeping operation to make an explicit reference to this responsibility. It has always been, and it remains, the primary responsibility of the Government of the Sudan to ensure the security of its own citizens. Over the past few years, it manifestly has not done so.

By adopting resolution 1706 (2006) today, the Council is appealing to the Government of the Sudan, in the strongest possible terms, to allow the United Nations to help it to do so. Such a decision would be in the interests of the Sudanese Government, the continent of Africa and the people of Darfur. The Council is here to help the Sudan, not to threaten it; to assist the Sudan, not to undermine it. The Government of the Sudan has nothing to lose from a United Nations operation in Darfur, and everything to gain. We hope to assist it in that endeavour.

Mr. Wang Guangya (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Darfur issue has attracted world attention and remains one of the top items on the Security Council's agenda. The African Union, at the request of the Government of the Sudan, has invested enormous energy and efforts in helping to stabilize the situation in Darfur. China has, all along, highly commended and supported its endeavours. In accordance with a decision by the African Union, after consulting with the Government of National Unity and upon its agreement, the United Nations will take over from the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS) in carrying out the mission in the region.

China is in favour of replacing AMIS with a United Nations operation. It is a good idea and realistic option, and it will help to improve the situation on the ground and serve the interests of all parties. We therefore support, with the consent of the Government of National Unity, the deployment of United Nations troops in Darfur as soon as is feasible. We also agree that the Security Council needed to take the necessary decision at an early date, so as to effectively fulfil the responsibilities set forth in the United Nations Charter and assist the Government of National Unity in achieving comprehensive and lasting peace and stability in Darfur.

The Darfur Peace Agreement, concluded in May this year, has created a new dynamic and offers new opportunities for resolving the Darfur issue. Unfortunately, the positive momentum was not fully exploited by the parties involved, and the provisions of the Agreement have failed to yield peace. More alarming, the security situation and the humanitarian conditions in Darfur have further deteriorated. AMIS, as the only peacekeeping force in Darfur, has an arduous task and is confronted with enormous difficulties. To ease the situation on the ground and the difficulties faced by AMIS, Secretary-General Kofi Annan has put forward some very good recommendations. The League of Arab States has also expressed its willingness to finance AMIS. The Security Council should attach great importance to that, give full play to the initiatives of various regional organizations, and help AMIS to overcome difficulties so that it will be able to continue the peacekeeping mission and ease tension in Darfur in a timely and effective manner.

To address and resolve the Darfur crisis, we need to bear in mind both a sense of urgency and a sober assessment of the complexity of the issue. We need to demonstrate both firm determination and the corresponding patience, as well as to take an effective approach. The transition of AMIS to a United Nations mission is a good and pragmatic approach. Such a transition can be possible and the mission can be deployed only when the consent of the Government of National Unity is obtained. That is the understanding of the African Union, as well as the decision of the Security Council.

In order to allay each other's doubts and deepen mutual understanding, Secretary-General Kofi Annan has proposed holding a direct high-level dialogue at the

Security Council among the parties involved. That is a constructive initiative endorsed by all Council members. As the hope is to conduct such a dialogue in early September, we deemed it unnecessary for the Council to put the draft resolution to the vote in a hurry. Postponing the vote would have helped to create a good atmosphere among the stakeholders, as well as an environment conducive to the smooth implementation of the resolution.

We felt that, under the current circumstances, the push for adoption by the Council would not contribute to the smooth implementation of the resolution nor help to stop further deterioration of the situation in Darfur. On the contrary, it may trigger further misunderstanding and confrontation on the part of the country directly involved. It may even cause problems with regard to implementing the Comprehensive Peace Agreement process. That is obviously not the outcome intended by the Council in adopting the resolution.

Having participated in all the consultation processes in a constructive manner, China agreed upon or accepted almost all the contents of the resolution. However, we have consistently urged the sponsors to clearly include "with the consent of the Government of National Unity" in the text of the resolution, which is a fixed and standardized phrase utilized by the Council when deploying United Nations missions. We also urged the sponsors to carefully reconsider the timing of the vote. Regrettably, they failed to earnestly heed China's sincere efforts. Due to our principled reservations on the timing of the vote and on the text itself, China could not but abstain from the voting.

I wish to reiterate that China continues firmly to support the peace process in the Sudan, as well as the relevant decisions of the African Union in that regard. We call upon all major parties to act in good faith, show mutual respect and understanding, continue to conduct frank dialogue, increase mutual trust and reinforce cooperation, so as to create good political conditions for the final settlement of the Darfur issue. China is willing and ready to make its own effort to that end.

Mr. Oshima (Japan): Japan voted in favour of the resolution on the Sudan. The resolution will expand the mandate of the United Nations Mission in the Sudan into Darfur to support the early and effective implementation of the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) and to provide for a transition from the African

Mission in the Sudan (AMIS) to a United Nations operation.

Given the worsening security situation on the ground and the resulting enormous humanitarian disasters and atrocities affecting millions of people — particularly women and children — in Darfur and in neighbouring countries, as well as their implications for peace and security in the entire subregion, we believe that the time is long overdue for the international community to take resolute action on the matter in order to address the situation quickly and effectively through adequate support for AMIS through the United Nations and a transition to a United Nations operation.

Having voted for the resolution, my delegation would like to make a couple of points.

First, we regret that members did not have an opportunity to consider the financial aspects of the elements that make up the resolution fully and in a timely manner prior to its adoption, given that a huge financial contribution is demanded of Member States. That is disappointing and needs to be improved in the future.

Another point we wish to make pertains to the fact that, for the resolution to be implemented, it is extremely important that the consent and cooperation of the Government of the Sudan be assured. To that end, we would like to underline once again the critical importance of continuing efforts to engage in dialogue and consultations with the Sudanese authorities. The position of the Government of the Sudan, unfortunately, does not appear to be quite there yet, although it does seem that the Government has indicated its intention to move in the direction of implementing the DPA. The plan for the restoration of stability and the protection of civilians in Darfur presented by the Government to the Security Council is, in our view, a welcome start, and it should be further explored and clarified in the ensuing dialogue.

Japan wishes to appeal to the Government of the Sudan to cooperate with the United Nations in bringing about peace and stability on the basis of the resolution. We also appeal to the non-signatory parties to the conflict to sign the DPA and to cooperate with the international community to put an end to the conflict and bring calm and prosperity to the people in the region. It is essential that, in striving to persuade the Sudanese Government to permit the transition to go

ahead, the approach must be firm but non-confrontational. It must seek mutual understanding. For those reasons, we strongly hope that the proposed meeting between the Security Council and high-level officials of the Government of the Sudan will materialize as soon as possible, and produce constructive results.

In conclusion, we wish to commend once again the efforts of AMIS and of all the humanitarian organizations — United Nations and non-United Nations — and their staff, who have been working courageously under very difficult conditions to save people's lives and alleviate their suffering.

Mr. Al-Bader (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): The delegation of Qatar would like to express its appreciation to you, Mr. President, on this last day of your presidency of the Security Council for this month. The Council has been seized with questions of extreme importance to humankind, including those relating to the maintenance of international peace and security. It is our hope that, having listened to our conscience, we will have succeeded in addressing those questions.

Since the very first days of our membership in the Security Council, our delegation has consistently upheld the provisions of the United Nations Charter and the tenets of international law, while giving due regard to political considerations, when addressing all the questions put before the Council, including the issue of Darfur. With the adoption of today's resolution, the issue of Darfur has now reached a drastic turning point, and we hope that we will be able to deal with it successfully.

For our part, we would have preferred a different approach to this sensitive issue. Due regard should have been taken of the numerous aspects and underlying concrete principles of international practice before adopting a resolution that will have a bearing on the sovereignty of the Sudan, a Member State of the United Nations. More efforts should have been made on the political front to prepare the ground for Sudan's voluntary consent to expanding the mandate of United Nations forces and increasing their strength and deploying them to Darfur, a region we know is fraught with tension.

Nevertheless, we also know that the region has undergone many positive developments since the signing of the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA), last May. We also know that, in a commendable gesture,

the Government of the Sudan submitted a multifaceted plan to address the situation in Darfur. Regrettably, the Council did not provide the Government of the Sudan with its response to the plan, nor has it submitted any explicit proposals by way of amendments, despite the fact that the plan included many aspects that have been deemed positive by the relevant department of the United Nations Secretariat. Nor were enough efforts made to engage the Sudan instead of pressuring it into approving the resolution that the Council has now adopted. As far as we know, consent is voluntary.

We would have preferred to provide financial and logistical support to the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS) to enable it to complete its mandate, which it has, for the most part, carried out honourably and commendably. AMIS has gained considerable experience in dealing with the situation in Darfur. The African Union should be proud of its ability to resolve the problems facing its member States. Support for AMIS has often met with repeated calls to end the Mission's deployment in Darfur and to replace it with international forces.

We had hoped that the normalization of relations between the Sudan and Chad would be positively viewed. In addition, the improvement in the relations between the Sudan and Eritrea should have been deemed a step forward. However, statements made in certain quarters have continued to describe the situation as plummeting into further deterioration.

The League of Arab States, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Government of the Sudan all welcomed the idea of convening of an open Security Council meeting last week. They desired to postpone such a meeting only to enable the stakeholders to attend at a high level. That position was not well received and the request to postpone the meeting was declined. That put the draft resolution at a disadvantage when the Council failed to meet as requested. My delegation has been keen to preserve the unity and consistency of the Council, and that is why we requested that the discussion on any draft resolution be postponed until all of those elements were in place. However, the draft resolution's sponsors, for whom we have the utmost respect, had a political point of view requiring its speedy adoption.

In the light of the above, the delegation of Qatar could not support the resolution, given its repercussions and the modalities of its

implementation — which we understand to be one of the tasks entrusted to the Security Council — in the prevailing political atmosphere. Nevertheless, we shall, in cooperation with our Council colleagues, continue to address these tasks with professionalism, although we know how difficult they will be.

Mr. Lacroix (France) (*spoke in French*): My delegation welcomes the adoption of this resolution. The Security Council had to respond to the request made to it by the African Union and, of course, to the urgency of the situation in Darfur.

Indeed, in security and humanitarian terms, that situation is extremely worrisome. Over recent months we have seen continued and even growing violence. Its primary victims are civilians, a great number of whom are the direct targets of atrocities. Millions depend on international assistance for their subsistence. Yet the security conditions in which humanitarian aid is delivered continue to deteriorate. Access to those needing assistance is becoming more limited, and if the deterioration of the security situation continues, most humanitarian operations in Darfur will be threatened.

The Abuja Agreement, whose signing was a significant step towards a return to peace, is being weakened by the refusal of many movements to join it and by the continuing violence. The African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS) is thus operating in particularly difficult conditions; it recently suffered further human losses. The African Union's resolute engagement to support peace in Darfur deserves our full support.

The text that we just adopted confirms the Organization's resolve to assist in the return of peace to Darfur. Indeed, it envisages a remarkable effort by the United Nations, whose peacekeeping operations have now reached an unprecedented level. That is a real challenge for the Organization, and it is our collective responsibility to ensure that it is successful. That will require continued consultation with the Sudanese authorities, whose cooperation will be essential for the deployment of the operation in Darfur and for the fulfilment of its mission. Of course, the United Nations has no goal other than to provide its assistance to one of its Members, the Sudan.

The remarkable cooperation established between the African Union and the United Nations must also continue, both at the political level and in terms of the presence on the ground. The United Nations operation

in Darfur will, as envisaged in the resolution, have a distinctly African character and rely on strong African participation.

Finally, it will be important to continue to address the Darfur crisis in its regional dimension. Indeed, in recent months we have seen all the repercussions that it could have on the stability of neighbouring countries, particularly Chad and the Central African Republic. With regard to all of these points, the resolution that we just adopted contains clear guidelines, which my delegation welcomes. The spirit of cooperation that characterized the drafting of this text should also guide its implementation.

Mr. Vassilakis (Greece): Greece voted in favour of resolution 1706 (2006) because it believes that, given the deteriorating humanitarian and security situation in Darfur, the Security Council had to shoulder its responsibilities and act swiftly. As we have argued on this and on other occasions, when the Council is faced with a humanitarian crisis it has a moral duty to act expeditiously to stop human suffering.

The resolution provides for the immediate strengthening of the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS) and the expansion of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS) to cover Darfur. In addition, it contains language that ensures the effective protection of civilians and humanitarian workers as well as humanitarian access. In our view, those components are crucial to the Council's comprehensive strategy in Darfur.

Notwithstanding the above, the resolution does not mark the end of the road; rather, it constitutes a significant step in the right direction and towards a new beginning. The resolution contains the important element of the consent of the Government of National Unity to the deployment of UNMIS to Darfur. It offers the Government of the Sudan the opportunity to cooperate with the Council in implementing the resolution.

In that respect, resolution 1706 (2006) should be seen as part of the Council's continuous engagement with the Government of the Sudan to advance cooperation with it and to persuade it to reconsider its position. Continuous consultations with other stakeholders, such as the African Union, the League of Arab States and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, is also particularly pertinent in that regard.

In closing, I can assure members that Greece will be very helpful with regard to the smooth implementation of this resolution.

Mr. Burian (Slovakia): Slovakia, as one of the sponsors of the resolution, voted in favour of it and welcomes its adoption by the Council.

Slovakia remains convinced that the situation on the ground in Darfur requires quick and robust action by the international community to stop an upsurge in violence against civilians and to facilitate the implementation of the Darfur Peace Agreement. In that respect, the Security Council has the moral duty and responsibility to act without delay to prevent an escalation of the crisis, which would have dire consequences not only for Darfur, but for the entire region.

We believe that the resolution provides an important basis for addressing the urgent problems of a deteriorating situation in Darfur, including through an immediate strengthening of the African Union Mission in the Sudan and, subsequently, through a transition to a United Nations-led operation. In our view, such an operation is the best available option to cope with the complex challenges facing Darfur and to facilitate the peace process, leading to a lasting and sustainable solution to the crisis in Darfur.

Slovakia believes that, with the adoption of this resolution, the international community will continue to be very closely engaged with the Government of the Sudan in a constructive dialogue on ensuring the full implementation of resolution 1706 (2006) and resolving the crisis in Darfur in general, while fully respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country. We expect the Government of the Sudan to comply with the provisions of today's resolution and thus to help to end the Darfur crisis in the best interests of all Sudanese people.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (spoke in Russian): During the work on the draft resolution we have just adopted, the Russian delegation did everything possible to help achieve a peaceful diplomatic settlement of the situation in Darfur — a situation that is complex in every respect.

It is of fundamental importance that the resolution clearly states the overriding need for the consent of the Government of National Unity of the Sudan for the deployment of a United Nations

peacekeeping mission in Darfur in accordance with decisions of the Security Council and of the African Union. Such consent has yet to be received. To obtain it, we must continue constructive dialogue with the Sudanese leadership. We consider that the Security Council meeting planned for early September, with the participation of representatives of the Sudanese leadership, the African Union, the League of Arab States and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, will provide a good opportunity for that.

It is important that the Security Council support the Secretary-General's plan for a phased transition of the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS) under the auspices of the United Nations. The first phase would involve enhancing the quality and effectiveness of AMIS, to be followed by the deployment of United Nations peacekeepers — but, I repeat, with the consent of the Sudanese Government.

Pending the receipt of such consent, the Russian delegation decided to abstain in the vote on today's draft resolution, although we have no objections in principle to its content. We will continue to contribute to establishing full-scale cooperation between Khartoum and the United Nations in order to attain an effective settlement of the situation in Darfur on the basis of the Abuja Agreement and the normalization of the humanitarian situation in that province of the Sudan.

Mr. Mahiga (United Republic of Tanzania): Let me congratulate you belatedly, on the last day of your presidency, Sir, on your outstanding stewardship of the Security Council during the month of August, a month beset by many difficult and challenging issues on the Council's agenda.

The United Republic of Tanzania welcomes and supports resolution 1706 (2006) for three main reasons. First, Tanzania has always believed and maintained that the political, security and humanitarian crisis in the Darfur region of the Sudan is the concern and responsibility not only of the Sudan and of Africa but also of the international community as a whole, because of its profound ramifications with respect to international peace and security in the region of Africa. The Security Council should thus be actively seized of the search for a peaceful solution. At this stage of the crisis, that means involvement in the implementation and facilitation of both the N'Djamena Ceasefire

Agreement of April 2004 and the Darfur Peace Agreement of May 2006.

Secondly, we believe that the African Union has taken more than its fair share of the obligation and responsibility in the search for a peaceful political solution, through the Abuja peace process and through the deployment of the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS) to oversee the implementation of both the N'Djamena and Abuja Agreements. The African Union has discharged its obligations superbly in terms of the ownership and the handling of the crisis. But, by its own admission, it is overwhelmed and overstretched by the magnitude and complexity of the task of restoring peace to Darfur. Without the African Union abdicating its responsibility, it is right and proper that the rest of the international community, through the United Nations, should assume joint responsibility to help the Sudan resolve this long-running crisis, which is getting worse. Today's resolution heeds that appeal by Africa, through the African Union.

Thirdly, as an African member of the Security Council, we want to send a message of assurance and of solidarity with the brother State of the Sudan. We assure the Sudan that the sole purpose of today's resolution is to facilitate a peaceful resolution of the Darfur crisis and to strengthen the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Sudan. The solution can come only with full cooperation and partnership with the Sudan. The resolution defines, in a very transparent manner, the mandate and objectives of the United Nations involvement in Darfur. The Council is open to continuous consultation with the Sudan on the implementation of the resolution. Through this resolution, we encourage and invite the Sudan to be part of the tripartite partnership with the African Union and the United Nations, of which the Sudan is a leading member in this honest search for an enduring peace in Darfur — which the people of Darfur deserve.

Mr. Mayoral (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Argentina was a sponsor of resolution 1706 (2006) and voted in favour of it because we believe that one of the main obligations of the United Nations is to protect civilian populations. In that context, we believe that the Security Council cannot shirk its responsibility to protect, in particular, vulnerable groups — women and children — since they are defenceless. We are certain that the Government of the Sudan will now cooperate in strengthening the African Union forces and subsequently in expanding the deployment of the

United Nations Mission in the Sudan beginning on 1 January 2007. We look forward to understanding and assistance from the Government of the Sudan so that the deployment can take place in an orderly fashion, there must be no infringement of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of that country.

Finally, we insist once again that parties involved in the Darfur conflict who have not yet signed the Darfur Peace Agreement concluded in May do so without delay in order to ensure stable and lasting peace in the Sudan. Instability there affects not only that country but the entire region.

Mr. Faaborg-Andersen (Denmark): Denmark was a sponsor of and voted in favour of resolution 1706 (2006). We did so because, as we have heard over the past couple of days, the situation in Darfur is quickly deteriorating. People are dying every day, and the Council has a responsibility to act. The resolution proposes a dual-track approach: immediate support for the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS) in order to make it better able to fulfil its mandate, and simultaneous preparation of a United Nations takeover from AMIS, and a time frame for that. That comprehensive dual-track approach corresponds to the wishes of the African Union and gives all parties a sound basis on which to plan.

Nobody disputes that a United Nations force in Darfur can be deployed only with the consent of the Government of the Sudan, and there is absolutely nothing in the resolution that precludes further dialogue with the Government of the Sudan on this issue. Indeed, we hope that efforts will be stepped up to intensify the dialogue with the Government of National Unity to persuade it to accept such a transfer. The fact that the Government of the Sudan has not yet given its consent could not, however, be a reason to postpone the adoption of this very necessary resolution, because that would have meant delaying the very necessary support to AMIS, which can potentially save lives in Darfur.

We hope that all efforts will now be concentrated on the quick implementation of this resolution, to the benefit of the people of Darfur.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Ghana.

Ghana takes pride in having voted for the draft resolution authorizing the expansion of the United

Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS) into Darfur. UNMIS has the mandate, experience and capability to make a positive difference in the lives of the suffering people of Darfur.

As many as 16 African countries are already participating in UNMIS. This further underscores the close cooperation that has always existed between the African Union (AU) and the United Nations in the promotion of peace and stability in Africa.

Although the resolution is not a magic wand that will change the situation in Darfur overnight, its adoption nonetheless is timely and gives the Sudanese Government an opportunity to cooperate with the United Nations in seeking a peaceful and negotiated settlement of the crisis in Darfur.

We share the view that the adoption of this resolution, which also aims to highlight the gravity of the situation on the ground despite the signing of the Darfur Peace Agreement, still leaves the door open for effective cooperation between the Government of the Sudan, the United Nations, the AU and other international actors in finding a lasting solution to the crisis.

On the other hand, if the Sudanese Government persists in conducting military operations in Darfur, that would be a clear breach of the commitments undertaken under both the Darfur Peace Agreement and previous Security Council resolutions.

Ghana believes that, by voting in favour of the resolution, we have fulfilled a duty to the suffering victims of war in Darfur and, indeed, to all of Africa.

Our vote — that of a founding member of the African Union — also reaffirms one of the cardinal principles enshrined in article 4(h) of the Constitutive Act of the African Union, which recognizes the right of the Union to intervene in a member State in respect of grave circumstances, namely war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity.

In adopting that principle, the AU member States set themselves the highest standards of accountability in governance. But, more importantly, they assumed the responsibility to protect the victims of war on the continent. Clearly, the situation in the Sudan merits some form of international engagement that is timely, meaningful, well-coordinated and effective.

It is for those reasons that we have reservations about the inclusion in the draft text of explicit language that implies that the Government of the Sudan can take all the time it wants before allowing the United Nations to deploy in Darfur, or even refuse to do so, regardless of the cost in human lives. Several observers have repeatedly expressed concern about the alarming situation in Darfur. They cannot all be wrong.

Once again, therefore, we call on the Government of the Sudan to heed the voices of its own suffering

people and of the international community, because, from all indications, we have not acted swiftly enough.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 11.05 a.m.